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Your ref:

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DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT and HERITAGE STATEMENT

FOR PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DWELLING

WITHIN THE GROUNDS OF A GRADE II LISTED BUILDING

THE MAZE, 108 HIGH STREET, MARCH

CAMBS, PE15 9LP

1.0 INTRODUCTION

It is proposed to submit a Full Planning Application to Fenland District Council for the erection of a single storey dwelling within the grounds of 108 High Street, March.

Documents with the application include a Heritage Statement, Biodiversity Checklist, Design & Access Statement, Ecology Survey, Self Build Exemption, Flood Map and existing and proposed planning drawings.

2.0 FLOOD RISK

This site is located within Flood Zone 1, on the Environment Agency current flood map.

3.0 CONSERVATION AREA/LISTED BUILDING

This site is within the March Conservation Area and within the grounds of a Grade II Listed Building this being The Maze, 108 High Street, March, Cambs, PE15 9LP.

4.0 VEGETATION

Within the grounds of 108 High Street, there is a Sycamore tree which does have permission ref F/YR18/0809/TRCA for the crown be reduced by 30%.

This tree is in excess of 10m from the proposed dwelling and therefore an Arboricultural Report is not required.

There is no other vegetation over the site.

5.0 DRAINS/RIVERS

There are no open water courses within the site or open ditches immediately adjacent the site.

6.0 BOUNDARY TREATMENTS

Existing boundary treatments generally comprises of masonry walls particularly to the south and a fence to the eastern boundary which is to be

removed and relocated. To the northern boundary a fence/brick wall.

7.0 DRAINAGE

The current Environment Agency flood map does not indicate any annual likelihood of surface water flooding at this site.

Within the High Street there is an Anglian Water Foul Sewer together with all associated infrastructure.

Ground conditions at the site are generally March Sands & Gravels which would give good drainage to rain water soakaways.

A foul water connection would be made towards the eastern side of the site.

8.0 ACCESS

Access to this site is via High Street.

There is an existing access which serves this property and reference should be made to the design drawing for the geometry of the access.

The site at present allows for numbers of vehicles to enter and exit the site in a forward gear with adequate parking and turning within the site.

This proposal is for a single further dwelling on a site where there could be no further development and therefore the proposal is to only introduce a single dwelling off this access.

Parking and turning is shown for the existing property for a minimum of 3 cars.

The proposed property would require 2 car parking spaces with associated turning, which is shown on the design drawing.

High Street to the front of the site is a 30mph zone.

Where there are existing gates set back from the main road, as a result of this proposal these will be removed.

Generally, along this section of High Street the ground, pavement and road are generally level allowing good visibility in both directions.

Boundary treatments comprise of the adjacent property Norland House, which is also a Grade II Listed building of a brick wall no greater than 0.6m in height. This wall would need to be maintained as this is a Grade II Listed building and could not simply be increased in height which would hamper visibility.

Therefore, the visibility splay to the south would be satisfactory.

The visibility to the north back into March Town Centre, is within the applicants ownership and is open rail and these can be amended as necessary if required by the Highway Department.

Along this section of High Street, there is also a continuous white line indicating the established access.

It should also be noted that on this side of High Street, this is a relatively wide footpath.

9.0 ECOLOGY

An Ecology Report has been undertaken for this site and is attached with the application.

The site would be Biodiversity Net Gain exempt as this would be a self-build proposal.

10.0 DEMOLITION

There is an existing outbuilding within the site, which is not original and is to be demolished as part of the proposal.

A plan and elevations are shown on the existing drawings in this regard.

This is not an original building built with the main Grade II Listed house and has no historic or architectural merit.

11.0 EXISTING SITE

The existing site is set within the built up form of March within March Conservation Area.

Access to the site is via High Street, which is an established access.

This site to the east, south and west is surrounded by residential development.

To the north there is a Public House car park.

This site has long been established as residential usage with the principal property being Grade II Listed.

The site already has infrastructure from High Street.

There is a Sycamore tree at the site. However, this would not be affected by the works and permission is ready been given by Fenland District Council.

The site itself is generally level.

12.0 STREET SCENE

This proposal is extremely unlikely to be seen from High Street.

The dwelling is set well back from the High Street, which abuts development at Elwyndene beyond the east of the site.

This proposal therefore would not affect the character of the Conservation Area when viewed from High Street.

13.0 BIN COLLECTION

At present Fenland District Councils Bin Lorry does not enter the site.

This proposal would also mean that the bin lorry would not enter the site.

The proposal would still also the existing and new property to have 3 bins each, with these wheeled to the entrance on selection bin collection days. There is adequate room for these to be collected to ensure the bin lorry does not need to enter the site.

This is in line with the current situation at the site.

14.0 SITE HISTORY

The following site history was noted on Fenland District Councils Public Access.

F/YR18/0809/TRCA ~ Works to 1 No Sycamore tree within a Conservation Area.
Approval was given for the crown to be reduced by 30%.

F/0401/82/LB ~ Demolition of one chimney and re slating of roof at 106 High Street, March.
This is a 40 year old permission for various works to the Listed Building.

No other planning history was found on the public access/

15.0 AMOUNT OF DEVELOPMENT

This proposal is for a single storey residential dwelling.

No further development of residential dwellings can be made within the site.

16.0 FENLANDS CURRENT LOCAL PLAN 2014

Fenlands Current Local Plan was approved in 2014 and is 11 years old.

Within Fenlands Local Plan the following policies would apply.

Policy LP3

Under this policy March is listed as one of the main four market towns where Fenland District Council wishes for growth.

The proposal would therefore comply with this policy as it is situated within the built up form of March.

Policy LP16

This policy deals with delivering and protecting high quality environments across the district.

The proposal in our opinion would not have a detrimental effect on the heritage asset which is a Grade II Listed building.

There is considerable distance between the single storey proposal dwelling which is less than 5m in height and the Grade II Listed building.

Although the proposal would be Biodiversity Net Gain exempt due to this being a self-build, the proposal would allow for bat boxes, bird boxes and owl boxes to enhance Ecology at the site.

The proposal also has a greater than a third garden area and also leaves a substantial garden area to the listed building.

There is a single tree on site which is to remain and is in excess of 10m from the proposed dwelling.

There are no open water bodies immediately adjacent or within the site.

The proposal would not impact the amenity of neighbouring users as to the north of the site there is a public car park for the Public House, to the east there is a further residential garden. To the south this is also a garden/property which is Grade II Listed and to the west there is the existing Grade II Listed building.

This proposal does have a large amount of plot area to garden as well as leaving a substantial garden to the existing property.

The proposal if approved would be constructed in accordance with Building Regulations in terms of security measures to assist in deterring crime.

The proposal would also be constructed in accordance with Part M of the Building Regulations.

About this site there are no landfill or adverse noise from industrial sites.

The proposal is for residential usage which would not have an adverse impact on adjacent properties.

The proposal is not a riverside setting. However, the proposal will be incorporating Ecology features.

The proposal would not threaten the operational viability of existing near by or adjoining businesses, or employment by introducing sensitive residential development into an industrial area.

The site is already set within the built up form of March surrounded by residential development.

17.0 LAYOUT

The layout of the site is shown on the design drawings.

This proposal is for a single dwelling as no further dwellings could be set within the site.

The proposal then allows for a substantial garden area for the Grade II Listed building to remain.

18.0 SUSTAINABILITY

The aim of the site will be to utilise recycled materials as well as renewable resources which are likely.

All materials will be sourced locally.

This would include for timber from sustainable forest, utilising locally available demolition and material to be used for patios, hardstandings, temporary access road and bases.

The proposal is for a high quality residential development.

19.0 ENERGY PERFORMANCE

The dwelling is hoping to achieve an A rating on Energy Performance, giving the high insulation values for the property which would be in accordance with Building Regulations and likely to be 10% higher than required.

20.0 CHARACTER OF THE AREA

The character of the area is generally built up residential dwellings set within March Conservation Area.

It should be noted that immediately north of this site there is a Public House with a car park about the rear of the site and a beer garden beyond the northern boundary.

This has long been established as a Public House.

To the south of this site there is a Grade II Listed Building, Norland House, which does have further wings situated on the southern boundary and a further one and a half storey detached outbuilding that were given permission to be converted to residential usage, towards the central section of the neighbouring site.

Beyond this there is a further Grade II Listed Building which is a Fish and Chip Shop, which was given permission by Fenland District Council as a Grade II Listed Building to be further extended about the rear for residential properties which have been built out.

It should be noted that beyond the rear of these line of Grade II Listed Buildings, residential developments of Elwyndene and Stonecross Way have been allowed, which are a mixture of single, one and a half and two storey dwellings, which over the years have slowly been built out towards the line of these listed buildings.

Further to the north of this site, there are also further Grade II Listed buildings where development has been allowed to the east of these including Former Minstrels Nightclub, which is a Grade II Listed Building at 30-40 High Street, March, where residential two storey properties were allowed abutting the Grade II Listed building and a further block of two and a half storey flats was allowed in the grounds of the Grade II Listed building.

Immediately to the north of this a further Grade II Listed Building did have a large garden extending to the east, however a line of residential dwellings has been approved and built out all in the former grounds of this Grade II Listed building.

The National Planning Policy Framework is in favour of sustainable development.

Paragraph 12 of the NPPF states:

‘The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.’

Fenland’s Local Plan is dated 2014 and is ten years old. The emerging plan is not approved by the inspectorate.

Paragraph 115 of the NPPF states:

‘In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:

- a) sustainable transport modes are prioritised taking account of the vision for the site, the type of development and its location;*
- b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users;*
- c) the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code ⁴⁸; and*
- d) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree through a vision-led approach.’*

Paragraph 127 of the NPPF states:

‘Planning policies and decisions need to reflect changes in the demand for land. They should be informed by regular reviews of both the land allocated or development plans, and of land availability. Where the local planning authority considers there to be no reasonable prospect of an application coming forward for the use allocated in a plan,

- a) It should, as part of plan updates, reallocate the land for a more deliverable use that can help to address identified needs (or if appropriate, deallocate a site which is undeveloped)*
- b) In the interim, prior to updating the plan, application for alternative uses on the land should be supported, where the proposed use would contribute to meeting an unmet need for development in the area.’*

Paragraph 187 of the NPPF advises:

‘Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes*
- b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside*

- c) *maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast*
- d) *minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity*
- e) *preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability*
- f) *remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.'*

22.0 HISTORIC ENGLAND LISTING

The Grade II Listed Building was first listed on the 16th of December 1974.

List entry number is 1287723.

The grid reference for this property is TL41664 96222.

The listing describes the property as a

“House, mid C18 and C19. Narrow gault brick with red brick to quoins, partly obscured by later render to front wall. Side walls have English bond brickwork. Steeply pitched roof of Welsh slate and end stacks (rebuilt). L-plan. Two storeys. Raised and moulded surrounds to three sixteen pane hung sashes. Three similar windows at ground floor and two doorways. The doorway to right hand has late C18 panelled door. Left hand doorway has later door but early C19 rectangular fanlight with glazing bars. Kitchen wing at rear. Inside: Plan of hall and stairbay flanked by two rooms with further room to left hand. Staircase, c1750, open string of four flights with enriched tapering columns as balusters and square newels with sunken panels and moulded rail. Three doorways at ground floor in round headed arches with raised surrounds and scrolled keyblocks with bead enrichment. Raised and fielded panelled doors. Original fireplaces also of narrow red and yellow gault brick.”

23.0 WHAT IMPACT WILL THE PROPOSAL ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HERITAGE ASSETS AND SETTING EFFECTING BE

The proposal would have minimal effect of the Grade II Listed Building which is set to the west of the proposal.

This is a substantial listed building which would be unaffected and no works are required to the building as part of this application.

This proposal is single storey which would not detract from the substantial listed building.

24.0 HAS THE PROPOSAL TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE NATURE OF THE HERITAGE ASSETS.

The proposal has taken into account the heritage assets by minimising there proposal to single storey which is clearly significantly different from the Grade II Listed Buildings to the west of this site, which are two and two and a half storey substantial buildings.

Good quality materials will be utilised as part of this proposal which would be agreed via a condition.

25.0 EXISTING HERITAGE ASSETS

The existing heritage assets are in a line of Grade II Listed Buildings to the west of this site.

This site and the listed buildings are within March Conservation Area.

Beyond the east of this site there are all newer developments of approximately 20 years in age and 60 years in age.

The proposal would not impact the line of Grade II substantial Listed Buildings as it is set a considerable distance from the buildings allowing for a substantial garden and parking area, similar to existing with the existing parking area to the listed building being maintained as existing, together with the existing gravel areas being maintained as existing.

The dwelling could even appear subservient to the Grade II Listed Building, although set a considerable distance away and could be more in keeping with the adjacent Elwyndene development of the 1960's/70s.

26.0 ADJACENT HERITAGE ASSETS

To the west of this site there are a line of Grade II Listed Buildings which would be 106 High Street which is a Public House, 108 High Street which is part of this proposed site, 110 High Street and 112 High Street with these being Grade II Listed Buildings.

It should be noted that 112 High Street, has been allowed to extend about the rear of the Grade II Listed Building even attach to the listed building by Fenland District Council.

27.0 CONCLUSION

This site is within the built up form of March.

The site complies with Policy LP3 of Fenlands Local Plan as it is set within the growth town of March.

The site is located all within flood zone 1.

There is no vegetation within 10m of the proposed dwelling.

The property does have greater than a third plot area to garden.

The proposal as well as the existing building would still have adequate parking and turning for 2 spaces for the proposed dwelling and greater than 3 spaces for the existing building.

The site benefits from an existing access on to High Street which is a 30mph road.

The proposal is single storey with no overlooking and maintains the character of the listed building as this is set within a considerable distance from the Grade II Listed Building.

There will be no overshadowing onto neighbouring properties from the proposal, this being single storey and set well away from adjacent residential properties.

The majority of the principal openings are set on the front and rear elevations with limited openings on each side elevation.

External materials can be agreed via a Condition with the Planning Officer.

A landscaping scheme can also be conditioned if required.

It should be noted that the existing rear grounds of the Grade II Listed Building are majorly gravel areas and not lawn. Therefore, the proposal is not using garden area.

The proposal is therefore policy compliant.

This proposal does not require any work to the Grade II Listed building or the access to the Grade II Listed building from High Street.

The proposal leaves a substantial garden area to the Grade II Listed Building and parking area.

The proposal would not be detrimental to the Conservation Area and cannot be seen from the street scene.

A Heritage Statement is required with this proposal as part of National Planning Policy Framework, which has been incorporated into this Design & Access Statement.

CONSERVATION REFERRAL COMMENTS

Application Ref: F/YR25/0328/F

Address: 108 High Street March Cambridgeshire

DC Case Officer: K Crow

Conservation Officer: S Falco

Date: 03/06/2025

Proposal:

Erect 1x dwelling involving demolition of shed within a Conservation Area

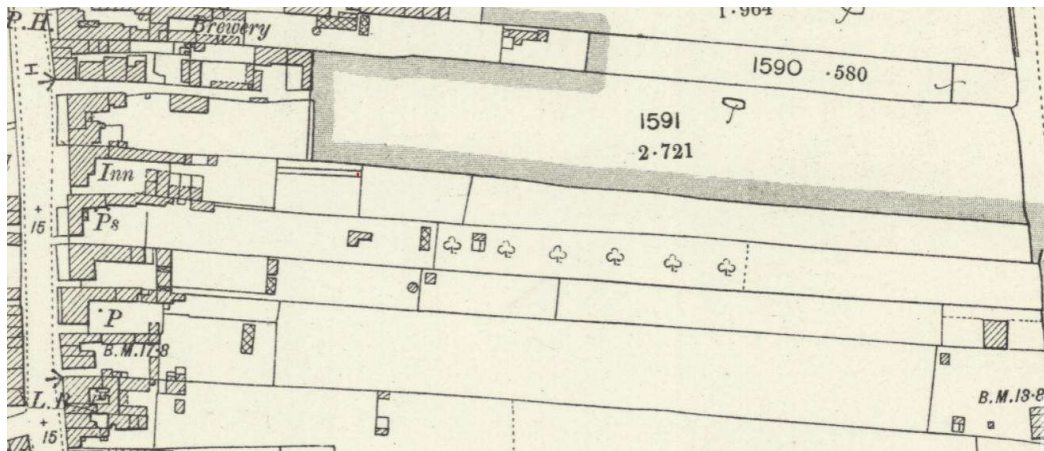
Considerations:

1. Consideration is given to the impact of the proposal on the architectural and historic interests with special regard paid to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses according to the duty in law under S16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
2. Consideration is given to the impact of this proposal on the character and appearance of March Conservation Area with special attention paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area according to the duty in law under S72 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
3. Consideration is given to the impact of the proposal on the architectural and historic interests of a Non-Designated Heritage Asset with special regard paid to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
4. Comments are made with due regard to Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework, 2023, specifically, paragraphs 201, 203, 205, 206, and 208
5. A heritage statement has been submitted with the application that just about meets the requirements of 207 of the NPPF.
6. Due regard is given to relevant planning history.

Comments:

The land proposed to be developed is garden backland within the curtilage of a GII listed building. As previously mentioned under in comments pertaining to a pre-application enquiry for residential development proposals under 24/0050/PREAPP, that such backland development and hiving off from listed building curtilages should only take place in **exceptional circumstances** where harm can be robustly justified or outweighed by **strong public benefits**.

As can be seen from the early C20 OS map below, the land has formed a long linear curtilage, likely since the construction of the building. The curtilage has already been substantially truncated during the mid to late C20 with the construction of modern estate housing to the rear, as have a number of neighbouring listed buildings.



The neighbouring listed buildings no's 110 and 112 have estate development encroaching slightly further up the garden than the host property. However, this proposal would bring this proposed development the furthest incursion in to the curtilage of all when considered against the adjacent listed buildings.

There is a particular concern that this proposal will result harm to the setting of the Listed Building, as well as resulting in a precedent for further development within the gardens of these listed buildings.



Putting aside the negative impact on the setting of the listed building and its characteristically long linear plot that has been truncated substantially already. The host listed building is large and is considered to require a suitably proportionate curtilage. When taking into consideration the amount of garden proposed to be taken for the new dwelling, as well as a substantial amount taken for the purposes of for an access driveway, this results in substantial reduction in curtilage and an awkward development layout.

Whilst the proposal will take up less space the previous pre-app proposal, the impacts on the remaining historic linear curtilage and setting of this listed building remain particularly unacceptable.

Design:

The design of the structure considered on its own, is a basic modern bungalow form with the gables awkwardly dressed in cladding, as a contrived nod to an agricultural building, but fails to do so. As such, the building design does not seek to respect or reflect the setting of the host listed building.

Conclusion:

There is strong concern that the proposal substantially erodes what is left of the historic linear curtilage to the rear of this listed building.

There is also strong concern that carving up the plot with modern fencing to create a driveway significantly impacts the historic setting of the rear of this listed building and gives rise to a precedent for similar harmful development proposals for the adjacent listed buildings.

There is considered to be a medium level of less than substantial harm as a result of the proposals. Taking para 205 of the NPPF into account – *‘When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the*

asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance', the presumption should be for refusal.

Taking para 206 into consideration - *Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.* There is no clear and convincing justification submitted to outweigh the harm as part of this proposal.

Para 207 is not relevant as it related to substantial harm - i.e. entire loss of the designated heritage asset.

Taking para 208 into account - *Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.*

There are deemed to be no public benefits (only private) to arise as a result of approving this proposal, making the development contrary to both national and local planning policy.

There is a strong heritage objection to the principle of any backland residential development by way of splitting the historic curtilage of this listed building and the resultant detriment to historic layout and setting.

RECCOMENDATION: Object – Refuse